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by Robert Lekachman

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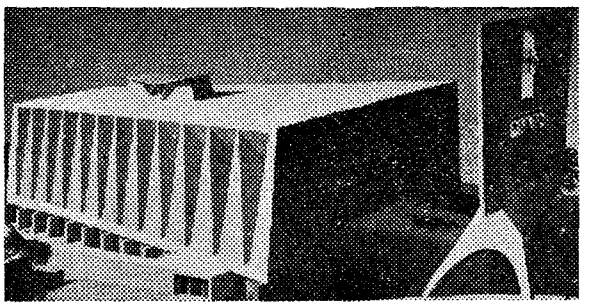

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

CANDIDATES, ISSUES AND VOTERS

THE NOMINATIONS of Vice President Richard Nixon and Senator John F. Kennedy have produced in this country a general reaction that is probably unique in our political history. Where excitement should be expected, apathy prevails. The times are admittedly out of joint and the United States must accept much of the responsibility of trying to set them straight. The burdens of the next Administration will be truly enormous, and so too will be the potential powers of that Administration. There will be decided within the next decade issues which will profoundly alter our domestic life and our foreign relations.

The issues which face us as a nation are as demanding, as intrusive upon our personal consciousness, as any we have faced in our national history. In the face of this, is the general apathy, the lack of excitement, due to the candidates? The general answer seems to be "Yes." Except for those few people whose political passions are at white heat even during the most predictable convention and the most worn addresses, the most common reaction, apparently, is uneasy satisfaction with the candidates.

Eric Sevareid put succinctly what has become the staple of many political columnists. "Members of both parties have clapped on command," he wrote, "but in his heart every other Republican I know is a little uneasy about Nixon; every other Democrat I know is a little uneasy about Kennedy." And the comparisons between the two men grow. They are both said to be articulate, intelligent, tough, ambitious. They are "organization men," "processed politicians," "the synthetic candidates." Since it takes only a minimal imagination to join the two candidates in such umbrella terms, the clichés are likely to increase.

Much of this reaction, and the political commentary which follows from it, is irresponsible and dangerous. The two candidates are not political twins, nor do they come from identical molds. They have different backgrounds and different educations and they have given their political allegiance to different parties. It is the work of the intelligence to perceive these differences and of the critical imagination to judge their likely consequences. It is irresponsible to forego this work in favor of witty disenchantment.

Still, if the political disenchantment is truly as great as it is reported to be, there must be in the present situation something which allows it. Why else would people who normally decry the "cult of personality," who wish to see leaders chosen on the basis of ability and promise, suddenly bemoan the absence of a "real personality," of a leader whose voice rings with the familiar rhetoric and who operates in the tried and accepted fashion.

THE TRUTH is that we are witnessing as a people an event which will become increasingly common in nations around the world. The old leaders are passing and the new are taking their place. Nor is it merely the usual change of leaders to which our form of government has accustomed us. The fact is that both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kennedy represent a break with the past. Some of the old slogans are still brandished and memories of past revered leaders are still invoked. But both candidates are facing directly toward the future. One measure of their difference from other candidates is that one can be sure, whoever wins, that we will see a distinctly new Administration. Another measure of their break with the past is that the ideas and attitudes of many older but still articulate leaders are rapidly coming to seem quaint and outmoded.

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It is this fact, whether it is consciously realized or not, which has disconcerted many Democrats and Republicans and which has unsettled a whole generation of liberals who feel that their time of leadership has somehow passed them by. And many are indulging in a frustrated nostalgia for a future that will never be.

The political commentators have been complimented, and they have taken to complimenting themselves, for the detached, non-partisan attitude they have, with a few exceptions, maintained toward the candidates. Under the circumstances the compliment has become highly dubious. One can question whether it is not at least as dangerous to minimize the differences between candidates as it is to exaggerate them.

Fortunately the candidates are articulate, skilled politicians who are in a position to make their views known and felt, who are ready and able to make maximum use of the best of modern communications. Before the day of election every voter will have the chance to know the candidates' views on the most important issues before the country: on our foreign policy, on civil rights and civil liberties, on farm problems, on education, on unemployment, social security and medical aid.

It is possible that the disenchanted will prove to be prophetic, that the debate between the two candidates will increase rather than decrease the allegedly widespread apathy, that the voters will actually feel that there is little real choice between the two men. The reverse, however, seems more likely true. As the two men become increasingly better known and their views are more widely disseminated, the opposition between them will be recognized, choices will be made and loyalties will develop. And this is as it should be. The issues are too great, the outcome too vital for it to be otherwise.

DIMENSIONS OF SOVIET AID

FROM ALL accounts the peoples of the Soviet Union now normally get enough to eat, but in other respects their living standards continue to compare quite unfavorably with those enjoyed by the peoples of the West. The undoubted progress made by the U.S.S.R. in providing greater amounts and varieties of consumers goods at home is a gradual one in a totalitarian state where priority still goes to armaments and heavy industry. Yet with its lower living standards, the Soviet Union manages to carry on a foreign aid program of no mean proportions.

So far a score of nations in all sectors of the globe have been the principal beneficiaries of a program which involves development loans at half the rate of interest offered by the West and the influx of well-briefed Soviet engineers and technicians (eight hundred of them in India alone). As a prelude to such agreements Moscow often invites the prospective beneficiary nation to send a trade delegation for lavish entertainment and carefully conducted tours to various Russian resort show-places and installations which are cited to demonstrate that for underdeveloped nations the Soviet way is the surest way to efficient industrialization.

This worldwide economic-political offensive has the advantage of central planning as an integral part of step-by-step progress toward a clearly defined goal. And the *Christian Science Monitor* characterizes these red-carpet activities, which have no counterpart in the free world, as "the seed beds of world communism," with the guiding idea in Soviet foreign aid to "neutralize as many nations as possible, but only as a prelude to taking them over, either politically or economically." It is therefore instructive to run over the beneficiaries of the largest Soviet foreign investments outside the Iron Curtain in the past five years, country by country. In this hemisphere there are Argentina and Cuba; in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Yemen; in Europe, Yugoslavia; in Africa, Ethiopia and Guinea; in the Far East, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Nepal. Of all these the largest sums went in descending order to Egypt, India, Indonesia, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Here is a blueprint deserving of the most painstaking study.

FARM PROGRAMS

THERE IS evidence that many American farmers have a distaste for a set-up based on such mechanisms as subsidies, acreage controls and price supports. If it were feasible they would much prefer to produce as they see fit, individually, and then receive for their labors what the open market would bring. They would much prefer it if their accelerating productive efficiency were automatically rewarded by likewise increasing returns. Psychologically they have a certain affinity for self-reliance as opposed to dependence on government help. For this reason the Eisenhower-Benson slogan of "less government in farming" has had a certain theoretical appeal.

But unhappily the American farmer has had to

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contend with other factors that propel him in a directly counter direction. He has found that without price supports he is greatly handicapped in an economy of protective tariffs, minimum wages and price agreements among manufacturers. His own products need protection, too, if he is to stay in business. And this is truer than ever of present-day agriculture where the capital investment even for a productive family farm of moderate size has to be so substantial.

In addition to the factor of the high costs of efficient, mechanized operations, the farmer finds that mounting commodity surpluses act as a constant threat to the sale of his produce. Whatever means of restraining production have been devised under Democratic or Republican auspices have been thwarted by technical advances which have impelled productivity per acre along a steadily ascending trajectory. If the present Administration has recently succeeded in making a big dent in certain of the stockpiles maintained at taxpayers' expense (dairy products, for instance), the overall accumulation is not shrinking, and there is an additional agricultural surplus of some eight per cent every year.

In short, the American farmer is confronted by insufficient "natural" demand for his products at the same time he has to contend with a cost-price squeeze that is growing in severity. That is the case even though billions have been expended for farm programs year after year under both Democratic and Republican auspices. Dissatisfaction is widespread.

The atmosphere, then, is propitious for change in our national farm policy. What sort of remedies appear most likely? For some time to come, change will hardly take the form of less government intervention. Both Presidential candidates foresee heavier rather than lighter public expenditures for the purpose in the immediate future. One important possibility is a different kind of government subsidy. Wheat, for example, would be supported at three different levels. This would differentiate bushels sold for domestic foodstuffs from those marketed for animal feed and from foreign exports —a mechanism recalling the Brannan Plan, in which government payments were to make up the difference between the price the farmer received on the open market and the parity rate.

Another modification would further limit the maximum for benefit payments to agricultural corporations as opposed to privately owned farms. In this connection, experts contend that the mechanized "family farm," a term which the *Wall Street Journal* recently sought to equate with marginal and sub-marginal farming operations, is a more efficient enterprise with its several hundred acres than the giant factory-in-the-fields which thrives by means of various government benefits and exploitation of its labor force.

Finally, all hands seem to be agreed that ways must be found to increase both domestic and foreign consumption (this would include the amassing of a strategic food reserve) and to conserve the nation's soil resources in the interest of the anticipated great numbers in future generations. To be effective, major changes in national farm policy should go hand in hand with a continuation of those programs which have proved to be most beneficial and far-sighted for the farmer himself, the nation and the world community.

TROUBLE, TROUBLE

SINCE the hopeful accession to power of the Castro regime in Cuba, some twenty months ago, almost every week has brought grounds for additional "viewing with alarm" of developments in the island republic. Last week was no different.

Speculations about the increasing power in the Cuban government of Fidel Castro's brother Raul seemed to be confirmed by the public assumption by Raul of some of the authority relinquished by his ailing brother. And Raul, let it be noted, is the openly pro-Soviet, anti-Yankee agitator of whom Fidel once said: "If you think I'm radical, wait till you see my little brother."

Cuban "retaliation for economic aggression" by the United States—that is, the recent slash in Cuba's quota of preferred-price U.S. sugar imports—came in the form of seizure of an additional nearly eight hundred million dollars' worth of American-owned property on the island. This means that most U.S. holdings there have now been seized, and Premier Castro has hinted that everything else owned by Americans may soon be taken over, too.

Anti-U.S agitation in Cuba grows constantly more intense, collaboration with the Soviet Union —and its rockets—grows closer every day, and the "Communization" of the Cuban government grows wider and swifter. The Cuban hierarchy has for the first time officially warned against "the increasing advance of Communism in our country." Cuban representatives promise to take the offensive against the U.S. in the forthcoming meeting in Costa Rica of Western Hemisphere foreign min-

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isters, and there is now little hope that this meeting will be able to do anything to reduce the differences between the two countries.

If any prediction can be made, it is that the unhappy Cuban pattern will continue, and that next week's news will be worse than today's.

CIVIL RIGHTS: A GIANT STEP

CIVIL RIGHTS for Negroes is now a highly-charged political question, and the vote-getting importance of this issue has been attested by both candidates and both party platforms. But quite apart from the significance of civil rights as a campaign issue, the advances presently being made in this area, and the further advances which are surely coming regardless of the outcome of this fall's political contest, must be a source of great satisfaction to every believer in equal rights for all Americans.

Most obviously, the forthrightness of the civil rights declarations in the Republican and Democratic platforms indicates that 1960 will mark a major breakthrough in the effort to protect Negro and other minority rights. While it is true that campaign platforms are to some extent made to run on and not to stand on, it is also true that the commitments made this summer by both parties can not easily be evaded or reversed. The tide has turned, and there will be no turning it back.

Underscoring this point is the fact, cited with a measure of distaste by some, that both parties have apparently managed to reconcile the irreconcilable in their purposes and make-up. The liberalism of both platforms, and not alone in the area of civil rights, has set conservative Republicans and Southern Democrats alike to muttering and grumbling. But however much this liberalism may be disliked, it has nevertheless been accepted as the price of political success, today and in the future. Federal intervention on behalf of Negro rights has been accepted as inevitable by Senator Eastland of Mississippi, for instance, who said he "can live with the platform," and by Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, who said he will support the G.O.P. platform in spite of its "extremism."

A straw in the civil rights wind is the recent unexpectedly easy victory of Senator Estes Kefauver in the Tennessee Democratic primary. There is, of course, a danger of overestimating the importance of Senator Kefauver's win. In the first place, Tennessee is a border state, not deep South, and other issues besides civil rights were involved. Second, the votes for Senator Kefauver showed a pattern of strength according to geographical "northern" and "middle" orientation of the counties. Third, the fact that a number of Republicans crossed over to the Democratic primary tends to blur somewhat the significance of the results. And, last, the success of a firm supporter of Negro civil rights in Tennessee must be balanced, in any national reading of trends and tempers, by consideration of outright segregationist Orval Faubus's recent success in winning renomination for the governorship of neighboring Arkansas.

Granting all these qualifications, however, it nevertheless remains clear that the effort to rouse feelings against Senator Kefauver by ardent racist propaganda, by appealing to resentment stirred by Negro sit-in demonstrations, even by charges of Communist sympathy, turned out to be remarkably unsuccessful. By a margin of about two to one, Tennessee Democrats cast their votes for a liberal, an avowed believer in civil rights legislation and a Southerner who is clearly identified with the national party and the national party platform.

Another indication from the South, small but significant, may be found in some figures on the desegregation of lunch-counters recently released by the Southern Regional Council. The Council, an organization of white and Negro Southerners formed to advance "equal opportunity for all the South's people," listed twenty-eight Southern cities where merchants have this year desegregated their eating facilities. Moreover, as the Council report pointed out, in none of these cases were there any incidents or disorders. Many of the merchants involved expressed relief that the change had been accomplished and none reported any loss of business. This was the report's conclusion: "As the Southern Regional Council has said many times before, the amount of good will and fair-mindedness among white Southerners has almost always been underestimated by our leadership. So too have been the good sense and good manners of Negroes seeking equal rights."

It would be foolish to pretend that the evil fruits of racial discrimination can be swept away in a few short years, or that the rectification of this historic wrong and all its interwoven consequences can be accomplished without sacrifice and pain for all of us. There is struggle ahead, and perhaps anger and discord, but the victory is beginning to be in sight. Our political parties have taken a momentous step forward, and the cause of civil rights for all Americans is moving inevitably, irresistibly ahead.

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Growth for What?

Economic growth should be a by-product of the pursuit of purposes worthier than sheer size

by ROBERT LEKACHMAN

THE AMERICAN rate of economic growth seems fated to be one of the key domestic issues of the Presidential campaign. Much of the anti-Administration artillery of the Democratic Advisory Council has taken dead aim at the fact that since 1953 we have grown at the exceedingly modest rate of 2.4 per cent annually. Not only has that other international heavyweight, the Soviet Union, expanded at something like 6-7 per cent per year over the same period, but our allies, with the exception of England, have outstripped us as well. Between 1950 and 1957 Japan's economy swelled every year by an average of 8.5 per cent. Scarcely behind her, West Germany enjoyed an 8.0 per cent expansion. Even countries like Italy, France, the Netherlands, and Mexico all did considerably better than we did.

Prior to the nominating conventions the Democratic chorus of criticism on the growth issue was joined by that Republican soloist, Nelson Rockefeller, who advanced a 5 per cent growth rate as a desirable target, even though his speeches have been a good deal plainer about the target than the means of hitting it. Richard Nixon, who appears to be on all sides of this issue as of most others, by implication reproved Mr. Rockefeller, in the accents of Stephen Potter, for playing the parlor game of growthmanship. All in all, the growth issue may be decisive in November, especially if the present languor of the economy persists.

Presidential election years, however, are seldom ideal occasions for the clarification of complex economic and social issues. The danger of cloudy counsel is especially great here because the disputants have laid down dense smokescreens of statistics which prove many different conclusions about the meaning of our recent growth record and identify numerous candidates for any blame that might be appropriate. It might be well, therefore, before partisan tempers rise, to try to sort out the real from the fake problems implicit in arguments about desirable rates of economic growth.

IN THE FIRST place, why is it so important to grow? Elephants are not superior to cats. No proof has been adduced that the greater bulk of contemporary Yale men coincides with any increase over their Yale-bred fathers in intelligence, enlightenment, or public spirit. Big cities are not necessarily more pleasant than smaller ones. Who would prefer Chicago to San Francisco? Does it automatically follow, then, that nations which grow rapidly are better off than those which grow slowly?

One reason for an affirmative response is demography. In the decade of the 1960's the American labor force will probably expand by a million and a quarter persons or more each year. Unless the economy expands, a good many high school and college graduates will find it hard or impossible to begin their careers in desirable jobs. Even now unemployment hovers around 5 per cent and the steel industry's operating rate has fallen below 50 per cent of capacity. When the population increases, an economy must grow simply to maintain existing living standards and insure reasonably full employment.

Isn't rapid growth also a necessity if we are to match Russian military power? If the Russians grow forever as quickly as they are now, and if we grow forever as slowly as we are now, the normal operation of compound interest will in a generation or less produce a radical disparity in the industrial power of the two nations, entirely in the Russian favor. But the military argument for growth is a slippery one.

For one thing, the Russians will probably grow more deliberately in the future because rapid growth is a feature of economies not yet fully mature. The recent German and Japanese spurts are exceptions which are related to postwar recovery. Secondly, what counts in

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the military race is not the absolute size of the two economies but the nature of the emphasis which each one places on social, economic, and military goals. It is guessed, for example, that the Russians are spending approximately as much on their military establishment as we are. But their economy is less than half the size of ours.

Nothing makes it certain that more economic growth in the United States would lead to a greater American expenditure on weapons, if, indeed, such expenditure is desirable. Within rather broad limits, the competition between such radically different conceptions of human government and human existence as the Russian and the American is decided by the choice of national goals rather than by the sheer size of the economy.

THIS LAST observation leads to the heart of the growth discussion. For years liberals have argued that we have shamefully sacrificed our communal life to the thoughtless pursuit of the pleasures of individual consumption. Galbraith's vivid attack upon the ethics of consumption sharply contrasted private affluence and public poverty, and the indictment is obvious for those with eyes to see. Ancient schools, underpaid and disaffected teachers, inadequate and frequently venal police forces, slums which sprout in one place as they are eradicated in another, and suburbs haphazardly sprawled across the landscape—these are some of the counts.

Now, say some of the growth optimists, if our economy were to expand at some magic figure like 5 per cent every year, then we could pump new nourishment into these neglected areas of our national life, without raising taxes and without depriving ourselves of a single item of the private comforts and luxuries which we appear to cherish so devotedly as a nation. And if we grew more rapidly, the argument continues, we could also afford to be more generous to foreigners. Even if we devoted no larger a share of our resources to foreign aid, we could vastly expand our economic aid to our Western allies, and undertake a much enlarged program of assistance to the underdeveloped areas of the world —India, Latin America, and the disturbed continent of Africa.

There is no doubt that it would be easier to persuade reluctant legislators to undertake larger public improvements and pay more heed to the needs of non-voting foreigners in an atmosphere of cheerful expansion than in one of gloomy stagnation. But it is easy to demonstrate that the basic argument here is too simple and the expectations too optimistic. Those who make the argument implicitly assume that Americans really appreciate the extent of our national and international needs and the corresponding size of the effort required to fill them. Is the assumption legitimate? Recent experience makes it highly dubious.

If we exclude defense from the calculation, in 1939 we devoted 13.4 per cent of our national income to all governmental purposes, or slightly more than one dollar out of every eight. In 1957 we diverted only 10.3 per cent of our national income to governmental uses, a little more than one dollar out of every ten. The comparison is worth pondering, for it indicates that in the enormously more affluent economy of 1957, we as a people decided that we could afford to spend only a smaller percentage of our resources on the community amenities and public services which distinguish a civilization from a plutocracy.

What then is the warrant for the expectation that growth will automatically reverse the tendency to exalt private consumption over public benefit and immediate domestic welfare over the interests of foreigners? The pessimist could just as readily envisage the use of growth to reduce taxes and perpetuate the overemphasis upon private consumption, too much of it purely trivial. The powerful mechanisms of advertising—no one blows an equally loud horn for public needs—tend to exaggerate the virtues of private spending. A business-oriented Administration has solidly reinforced this preference. If Americans choose to perpetuate such an Administration for another four or eight years, they will be implicitly choosing a continuation of the present pattern of choices.

Obviously growth and enlightened national purpose have nothing necessarily in common. In the economic and ideological competition for the world, we can fall behind the Russians just as readily with a Gross National Product of a trillion as with the more modest half a trillion we presently enjoy.

IN HIS *Autobiography* John Stuart Mill identified a lesson which the mental crisis of his youth had taught him. Happiness, he discovered, could not be attained by direct assault. Rather it was a by-product of well-chosen activity in the pursuit of satisfying goals. Something of the same sort can be said about economic growth. Growth also is a by-product, a by-product of the proper social and economic choices, and of the pursuit of purposes worthier than sheer size.

What is the key choice? Why will growth be its by-product? The basic choice is between private and public expenditure. That paragon of the free market West Germany devotes 15.1 per cent of her resources to public purposes. Apparently we could add another 5 per cent of our resources to public employments without approaching any closer to "socialism" than Konrad Adenauer's Germany. Such a diversion would aim not at growth but at the achievement of certain national goals. It would necessitate a reconsideration of the values attached to private consumption and public expenditure.

Where should the increased public spending go? A

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logical place to begin is with education. The Federal Office of Education recently forecast a need over the next decade for 610,000 new classrooms to provide for new enrollments and anticipated obsolescence. Present estimates put the cost of a new classroom at something like $40,000. An adequate school construction program combined with reasonable increases in teaching salaries will double national spending on education. A serious attempt to increase its quality and curtail the personal and national wastage implied in the failure of so many gifted children to enter college might triple our expenditure.

Most of us live in or near cities. How fares the city? Last year the Joint Committee on Washington Metropolitan Problems made a statement applicable to practically every American city:

"Its population is pressing against the limits of such natural resources as water supply. Its growth outstrips the capacity of existing sewage disposal plants. Where growth is most rapid, as at the suburban fringe, the shortage of government facilities such as schools, highways and parks is especially acute. With growing population has come territorial expansion into the metropolitan counties . . . and with the metropolitan 'explosion' the decentralization of government employment sectors, retail trade and much other private business. The metropolitan expansion, coupled with fundamental changes in travel habits and transportation technology has disorganized the older systems of mass transportation. . . . In the central city forces of social change have been accelerated by unprecedented migrations of population, the disorganization of residential neighborhoods, shifting land use, and the invasion of vehicles and parking facilities. The congestion and decay of the central city, the shortages and fiscal plight of the peripheral suburbs, the metropolitan transportation dilemma, and the dissipation of our natural resources are all parts of the same interrelated process of urban growth."

Few perceptive city dwellers would consider the indictment overdrawn. Communal remedy is the only specific for the ailment. Schools, libraries, museums, transportation, zoning, roads, water supply, parks, and beaches alike demand the application of enlightened public policies which are not hamstrung by inadequate public financing. Adequate financing depends upon higher taxes. Therefore, the social imperative of our time is a rise in tax rates. Upon this choice the others hinge. If mature consideration leads us as a people to value education of each person to the limits of his individual capacity, if decent, livable cities present themselves as worthy goals, and if the graces of life enchant the imagination, then public spending at home will have found its rationale and higher taxes their justification.

Much the same line of argument applies to our foreign commitments. Ethically it may offend us as a people to suffer from obesity while hundreds of millions of people in India, South America, and Africa suffer from malnutrition. We may even find in this contrast a better reason to aid India's Third Five-Year Plan than the threat of Communism. Less idealistically, we should be able to see that it is in our long-run commercial interest to increase the number of prosperous customers and suppliers.

ONE LIKELY reward of such policies is, as a by-product, economic growth. In the short run, increased government spending will increase the total output of goods even if the Federal budget is balanced. Higher taxes when the system is progressive collect some funds from the well-to-do that would otherwise have been saved rather than spent. Federal spending on schools and other construction will stimulate industries like steel which now give evidence of substantial overcapacity. In the short run, fuller use of our present economic capacity would promote higher economic growth. Probably twice as many persons are unemployed as even a liberal allowance for temporary layoffs, unemployability, seasonal slack, and job changeovers would justify.

The long-run gains would be the result of a more rapid rise in per capita productivity. The most obvious source of such an increase is in the improved quality and enlarged quantity of education. Much more rigorous than ours, the Russian educational system has had devoted to it twice as large a proportion of a much smaller gross national product. The ultimate explanation of economic productivity is the skills of human beings who invent and design capital equipment, coordinate the factors of production, manage the plants, staff the laboratories, and man the machines. Better education thus implies higher output, just as it should imply also a more discriminating taste for that output.

Better housing, improved urban amenities, and more convenient transportation will diminish illness, improve morale, and make production smoother. As an invention, the city is a monument to propinquity—of men and skills, factories and markets, needs and services. The unplanned urban conglomeration runs the imminent risk of losing these advantages in a tangle of traffic jams and weary public transportation.

In short, we will grow more rapidly when we perceive that economic growth is not the proper target of a humane society. If we aim instead at a higher quality of human experience, we will speedily divide our national resources more sensibly between public and private uses. We will cheerfully pay the higher taxes which are the price of this decision. We will achieve a more fully-employed, more diversified, and more interesting society, perfectly capable of high, balanced growth.

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THE CANDIDATES

THERE is a strong feeling in certain circles that the Republicans and the Democrats have given us different versions of the same candidate this year. Some disappointed Democrats at the Los Angeles convention claimed, bitterly, that Nixon was going to be kicked to death by his twin brother. Both candidates, the newspaper columnists and television commentators have said again and again, are tough, shrewd and hardboiled practitioners of a demanding art. And they are right.

Mr. Nixon has never pretended to be "above politics," like President Eisenhower. Although his role requires that he be ever so pious and reverent whenever the Eisenhower name is mentioned, even his most ardent supporters would not claim that he is cut from the same cloth. Mr. Kennedy, for his part, reminds one of the early Franklin D. Roosevelt, the master of wheels and deals, rather than of Adlai Stevenson, who never said that he was above politics but acted as if he would like to be.

Though I personally have no intention of taking a tweedle-dum, tweedle-dee position on the coming contest, I know what my disenchanted friends are talking about when they point up the resemblance between Kennedy and Nixon. Both men have the same style, and if politics were lined up according to personality, both would be in the same party.

Still, I don't think it is just a matter of personality. It seems to me that what the two of them have in common, and what upsets die-hard Stevenson followers openly and Eisenhower devotees secretly, is an attitude toward its uses. Neither of them shrinks from either the concept of power or its skillful use. Both seem frankly eager for personal power, which strikes many as lacking in good taste at least, and both are openly committed to the proposition that the United States should play its part in world politics with all the power at its disposal. Neither man shows any apparent shame that the nation has vast power and both candidates are clearly impenitent about demanding that it be used.

Now politics and power go hand in hand. Neither Mr. Nixon nor Mr. Kennedy was the first to discover that power relationships are an important factor in the world situation. Neither of them was the first to urge that American power be used to its fullest advantage. What is different is that they approach the whole question without shame. Neither speaks like the President of the early Eisenhower years, who claimed that the nation was strong because it was good, for don't virtue and strength go hand in hand? Neither speaks in the Sunday-school language of John Foster Dulles, who practiced power politics to the point of brinkmanship but felt it necessary to cover up what he was doing with frequent moralizing.

The speeches of neither candidate remind one of Dwight Eisenhower's homespun reminiscences or of Adlai Stevenson's brilliant exhortations to higher ideals and calls to moral greatness. Even Harry S. Truman, who said once without blushing that our military program was based on the Sermon on the Mount, was given to pieties that I would be surprised to hear during this campaign.

I do not mean to imply by this that either John Kennedy or Richard Nixon is indifferent to moral issues, is uninterested in national ideals or is unaware that no nation lives by ballistic missiles alone. The difference is that they are candid about relating all these concerns to the actual power facts of the naughty world we live in. There is no note of regret or lingering guilt in their talk about employing American power—whether it is military, economic or political power—on the world scene.

I think that is what some of their critics deplore, the missing element in these two young men that leads many to believe that whoever wins in November, the nation will be ruled by a cynic. For, despite the fact that since Pearl Harbor the United States has been engaged in power struggles just as much as England ever was, we still cherish the earlier image of ourselves as a nation unstained by any power dealings and devoted exclusively to such abstractions as "morality," "idealism," and "democracy." Any coming to terms with what we have actually been doing—trying to be moral, idealistic and democratic in a world in which power shapes the context for action—is jarring. That is why Mr. Eisenhower's "crusade," Mr. Stevenson's "call to greatness" and even Mr. Truman's appeal to the Sermon on the Mount have more resonance than the matter-of-fact acceptance of power and its uses which Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kennedy both appear to be advocating.

Americans have always been uneasy with power, and even after twenty years of the game, many are still scandalized by the blunt fact that America is required to act like the major power it is. The younger generation which has grown used to this idea and feels no need to apologize for it or to dress it up strikes its elders as callous, cunning and vaguely immoral. I think this may be true because although we have a long devotion to "morality" unspecified, we have given little or no attention to the whole problem of morality and the righteous use of national power.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Will the rioters, victorious in June, try again in the fall?

Non-Gentle Men of Japan

by EDWARD SEIDENSTICKER

SUMMER HAS settled over Japan, and on the whole things do not happen in Japan in the summer. It is true that the "China Incident" began in July, but that was perhaps because the dry air of North China had a heady effect on the soldiers from the damp, muggy islands.

At any rate, the demonstrations have died down, bickering among conservative politicians somewhat listlessly occupies the front pages, students have dispersed from Tokyo and Kyoto to the provinces, and the one militant event we have to look forward to is the annual anti-nuclear rally on the anniversary of Hiroshima. Preparations for this last also have a somewhat listless tone this year, as for an affair repeated once too often.

Before they dispersed the students were exhorted by various "progressive" persons and organizations to work hard at the "back-home movement," by which is meant the campaign to arouse in the conservative farm mind a suspicion of the Japanese-American Security Treaty. Reports from the provinces, however, suggest that summer has overtaken the students, and the back-home movement stagnates.

The question is what we have to look forward to when fall, the one really pleasant season in Japan, restores vigor. Some are cheerful. Only dislike for Prime Minister Kishi and his management of the new Security Treaty, they say, brought together the demonstrators of May and June. Now they have fallen into internecine feuding, and, the Japanese being so much a people of factions and cliques, we need not fear that they will come together again.

Others are more gloomy, pointing out that the crowds had their victory—let us not deny that to bring down a prime minister and prevent the grandest state visit in Japanese history was a victory—and will possibly have another try. They were brought together by a suspicion of the United States and the West that goes far deeper than dislike for Mr. Kishi, and could be brought together again by certain timely issues, say the question of Okinawa Irredenta. It should not be forgotten that Okinawa is to have elections in the fall.

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The demonstrations of May and June were made up chiefly of students and workers. The latter were brought in organized parties, each union being allotted a quota of demonstrators. It is therefore not entirely possible to know how conscientiously the ideological leanings of the worker-demonstrators were consulted. With the students there can be no doubt. They participated voluntarily. Cynics who argue that for the workers a demonstration was a paid holiday with a picnic thrown in do not make similar charges about the students. The latter may have enjoyed snake dancing and obstructing traffic and throwing stones at policemen, but beneath the boyish exuberance lay a seriousness.

To say that the students had in common something deeper than dislike for Mr. Kishi is not the same thing as to say that they were all Communists. Such charges have been made, and they are irresponsible. They obscure the really central point, as do the counter-charges, which tell us, after a head count of a somewhat uncertain nature, that "only 9.7 per cent of the student-demonstrators were Communists."

The important point is that the student-demonstrators were at one in supporting a foreign policy greatly to the advantage of the Sino-Soviet bloc and to the disadvantage of the West: disarmed neutrality for Japan. They did so because they were and are predisposed to take a sanguine view of the former and a distinctly sour view of the latter, and especially the United States.

DOUBTS will immediately arise. How could Christians have this in common with dialectical materialists? How could the Trotskyite have it in common with the neo-Stalinist, when each calls the other a betrayer of the Revolution? How could mixed-up children have it in common with hardened professional agitators disguised as students? For there were all these among the student snake dancers and stone throwers.

Attempts to divide so motley an assortment into neat categories are dangerous, but a rough division must be attempted if these puzzling matters are to be clarified.

1. The Christian pacifists. These are perhaps the

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most annoying of all, for, though small in number, they make claims to moral superiority, and the public, or at least the press, is inclined to concede them. The Christians in question are exclusively Protestant, the Catholic Church having managed to steer its believers away from the false dilemma between annihilation and surrender. Since there are only some two hundred thousand Protestant Christians in Japan, population ninety million, it will be evident that Christian pacifists who can be sure of getting into every big newspaper with their declarations and demonstrations attract attention far out of proportion to their numbers.

They are annoying because, having informed the public that they speak for the best in the West, they proceed to advocate Bertrand Russell's policy of unilateral disarmament even if it means surrender, and they will not admit that the choice between war and unilateral disarmament is not a real one for any responsible statesman. In their concern with disarming their own side of the world, they tend to blame it more for having arms than they do the Soviet Union for making arms seem expedient. If one points out that their goals, if attained, may invite grave days for themselves and their countrymen, they reply that Christianity is the way of self-sacrifice. If one says that their quest for "Christian" martyrdom at the risk of taking ninety million unwilling martyrs with them approaches blasphemy, they reply with looks as of St. Sebastian.

But to the reader who has not had the St. Sebastian look thrown at him, this will seem like an uncharitable description. It should be clear why Christians are to be found in a movement the final aims of which are to leave Japan without arms and allies.

2. *The Trotskyites.* These are the most amusing of all. They are in control of what is called the "main current" of the Zengakuren, the student federation which the events of May and June made world-famous. They profess to be the only real Communists, and Messrs. Mao and Khrushchev and the Communist Party of Japan are all right-wing opportunists. Indeed the only people since the death of Engels for whom they seem to have a good word are Lenin, Trotsky, and Messrs. Karôji and Shimizu of the Zengakuren.

Then why, if they dislike the epigones who currently run the Communist bloc, should we not consider them friends, much as we consider Mr. Nehru a somewhat unresponsive friend?

The answer is that their Leninism is too good to permit it. Messrs. Mao and Khrushchev may not be up to Lenin's level, but in their eyes someone else is worse: the capitalists whose internal contradictions make them turn to imperialist ventures, and whose imperialist ventures bring wars. A good Trotskyite may ask of the important people on the Asian mainland that they follow their revolutionary bibles somewhat more scrupulously, but he feels no need to ask that they cease making wars and threats of wars, for Lenin has told us where wars come from, and that is that. Japan must withdraw from the war-making bloc. Japan might one day have to arm against that bloc if it becomes truculent (the contradictions having gotten out of hand), but there is no need to arm against non-capitalist states. Hence the Trotskyites join the Christian pacifists in the drive for disarmed neutrality.

The Trotskyites are open to charges of less than air-tight thinking. If the Soviet Union and the New China are not run by ideally Communist leaders, then might they too not have within them contradictions of a sort, and might these contradictions not lead to trouble? One only has to talk with a few of these young people, however, to see where, in their world, the threat of war is coming from. One gets no sympathy for the view that the Soviet bloc is responsible for tension in Berlin, and was responsible for the Korean War, and behaved with unseeming harshness in Hungary and Tibet. The final answer is usually: "Go home, Yankee." Or, more politely and with an element of sophistry: "We are not against the American people, we are against the American imperialists."

3. *The orthodox Communists.* These are the most transparent and the least interesting. They form what is known as the "anti-main stream" of the Zengakuren, and recently they have shown signs of preparedness to form a Zengakuren of their own. They are quite simply under the control of the Communist Party of Japan, and, like it, want what Mr. Khrushchev wants. In spite of evidence that contradictory orders come from Peking occasionally, the Communist Party—and the Zengakuren Communists with it—still follows Moscow. Mr. Khrushchev wants a disarmed and neutral Japan but, it would seem, cautions against undue haste; and it is this caution that separates the main stream, in tactical matters, from the anti-main stream. The former wishes to rush ahead, sure that the masses will follow; the latter, with the Communist Party, urges working through a carefully organized "popular movement."

The two factions may disagree on whether or not the Soviet Union and the New China are model states, but they agree on matters of foreign policy, at least for the moment. The goal is disarmed neutrality. Once they have had a taste of what disarmed neutrality means, it may be that the Christian pacifists and the Trotskyites will have second thoughts, provided that they are still around to have second thoughts. One may expect, however, that the Communists of the anti-main stream will go on wanting what Mr. Khrushchev wants. Or possibly by that time the caliphate of Marxism will have moved from Moscow to Peking.

Not long ago *The Economist* made a remark that got into the Japanese press and was much approved of: "Even the Zengakuren students who made Americans see red are split in two, with the 'main stream faction'

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being violently anti-Communist." This is wholly misleading, suggesting as it does that the two factions cancel each other out. They make the student movement difficult for even its friends to manage, and they provide occasional touches of comedy, as when the secretary-general of the Communist Party called the main-stream faction "a hireling of American imperialism;" but it would, however, be a great mistake to expect of "violent anticommunists" in the Zengakuren what one expects of them in most places, that they look to the West for leadership.

4. The vague sympathizers. These are the most confused, the most disturbing, and probably the most numerous of all. They espouse no really coherent creed, not Christianity nor Trotskyism nor orthodox Moscow Communism; yet there they were snake dancing and throwing rocks. It must have been because they found the movement intellectually not dissatisfying and emotionally satisfying.

Emotionally they share with most young Japanese a wish for peace, since their earliest memories are of war and hunger; intellectually they share certain notions on how peace is to be maintained. Partly because the Eisenhower Administration has had a policy of speaking too loudly, and partly because their education has been at the hands of a teachers' union that agrees with the Zengakuren on the origins of war, they suspect the United States of belligerent intentions, and, in their eagerness to be beyond the influence of that belligerence, they tend to be a bit wishful about the intentions of the principal American adversaries. The five peace principles of the Chinese are accepted, the assurances of the State Department that U-2 is used only for weather reconnaissance are not.

One understands and in a way sympathizes. Defeat and the corrosion of old loyalties left behind a nihilism to which a few vulgarized Marxist notions have come as an anodyne, at least helping to explain what the world is about.

The student movement and its wild demonstrations have also brought companionship. A surprising number of students, questioned by the opinion pollers about their behavior, were able to give no better explanation than that it made them feel good. Japanese students tend to be rather lonely people, out of sympathy with their parents, kept at a distance by their professors, too isolated in the huge city to have what passes in America for student life, given to desperate pleasures and equally desperate acceptance of closed foreign secular philosophies.

Into this loneliness the Left has moved. Almost the only places in Tokyo where one finds clean young comradeship are the so-called "singing tea rooms," where, for the price of a beer or a lemonade, a student can sit all evening with other students and sing the works of Stephen Foster and of German beer halls, punctuated regularly by Communist propaganda songs.

One can understand and sympathize, and still feel alarmed. Although it was a very diverse assembly that rioted in June, it still had in common these vague opinions about the proper course for the country, and one should at least be prepared for the possibility that they could bring it together again, when the cool weather comes and we have a new prime minister.

MORRIS WEST'S NOVELS

The Shadow of Truth

by JOHN J. KIRVAN

DISCUSSION of Morris L. West's best-selling novel, *The Devil's Advocate* is likely to continue for some time. There is, for one thing, a promise of a Broadway adaptation. More importantly, the book continues to attract critics as a surprisingly rich deposit of themes that demand examination. In this examination, however, one especially rewarding line of investigation has yet to be pursued. No one has so far placed *The Devil's Advocate* in the context of West's previous work. Indeed, some critics have treated West as a newcomer to fiction. In fact, West has written at least five earlier novels and one work of non-fiction. His use of pseudonyms and his publisher's practice of changing titles from country to country makes the total record difficult to establish.

These previous works offer a particularly illuminating vantage point from which to evaluate his most recent novel, at once the best known and the most important thing he has done. This remains true even if one considers only the two novels and the work of non-fiction which immediately preceded *The Devil's Advocate*. The two novels are *The Crooked Road*

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(1957) (which appeared in England as *The Big Story*) and *Backlash* (1958). The non-fiction work is *Children of the Shadows* (1958). This book, which appeared in England as *Children of the Sun,* bears the sub-title: "The true story of the street urchins of Naples."

When placed against this background, *The Devil's Advocate* reveals itself as both typical of West and unique. He has probed its main themes before, but never so deeply. At the same time he has added a new dimension to his work which makes it worthy of truly serious consideration.

The Crooked Road is the story of Richard Ashley who, on his fortieth birthday, sits in a Sorrento hotel waiting to buy the evidence which will document the biggest story of his career. He is set to expose the machinations of the Duke of Orgagna whose abuses of foreign-aid funds have helped bring about the plight of post-war, southern Italy. Two things happen. The bearer of the documents raises the price and is threatened by Ashley. The reporter also renews his affair with a former mistress, the present wife of the Duke. The courier is then murdered by Orgagna through an agent, in circumstances which implicate Ashley, but unfortunately also Orgagna's wife. Orgagna finds it convenient to protect the man set to destroy him.

At Orgagna's home Ashley begins to unravel the tale. The murdered man is the half-brother of Orgagna's secretary and mistress. The husband of their common mother is not only Orgagna's servant but illegitimately shares Orgagna's blood and family pride. In the end this blood relationship and family pride destroy Orgagna.

On the surface West has created a slick action-romance, a "why-done-it." It cannot, however, be left there. This smooth tale is also serious social criticism. It comes from the same months of writing that produced West's anguished appeal for the children of Naples, *Children of the Shadows.* Orgagna is not a strict villain, but an able man doing what he can in an atmosphere of corrupt politics and indifferent religion. Not only is he no worse than the others, but he is, if not scrupulous, a man who can face the truth. In the final scenes Ashley sees in this truthfulness "the greatness in him."

On still another level West has written a version of the new kind of *Bildungsroman,* the novel of development or maturation. But instead of an adolescent coming to a "civilized" state, we see a sophisticated, middle-aged man of the world who, in a moment of crisis, loses the last traces of his naiveté and accepts social reality. In the last scenes of this novel Ashley kills his story, for even though "you cannot bury the truth so deep that it cannot be dug up" he realizes that the truth cannot be contained in headlines. Ashley is forced to turn from journalistic simplification to the political and human reality that a nation is not "black and white, good and evil, farce and tragedy. It's not a machine—it's people. And the only one who knows the truth about people is God Almighty."

IN THE BACKGROUND of *The Crooked Road* is West, the journalist, who in the disguise of a fugitive from justice, gathered the story of the *scugnizzi,* the homeless, loveless children of the back alleys of Naples. "I must," he wrote at that time, "make my voice, the voice of the children, the hungry, the homeless, the dispossessed, the damned innocents of Naples. I must batter on hearts for them, scavenging as they scavenge—not for bread, but for pity, and for human kindness, and above all for hope."

These last few words must strike a bell with those who have read *The Devil's Advocate.* For surely in this novel, so shot through with pity and compassion, there is an appeal for common, human kindness which comes to rest in a final atmosphere of hope.

One other novel makes an interesting setting for *The Devil's Advocate.* In *Backlash* we have still another return to the post-war years, to the backlash of war, and still another example of adult awakening. The scene this time is a resort village in the Austrian Alps. Major Mark Hanlon arrives as the occupation governor. But as he approaches the village his aide is shot by a skier whose tattered uniform reveals that he is from the vicinity, and whose scarred face is a point of identification. The story line centers on the manhunt which seeks to exact justice.

As in *The Crooked Road* there are personal relationships to confound the progress and deepen the meaning. Hanlon is a fallen-away Catholic who discovers that the parish priest was his novice master in the days when Hanlon had sought to be a priest. The accused skier is a nephew of the police chief, and like the priest whose hands have been all but destroyed by the Nazis (another former novice directed the torture), the skier has been left scarred and impotent by the Russians. Both priest and skier are symbols of war's destruction, but whereas the priest returns in compassion, the skier, a former doctor, has come back bitter, his mind all but destroyed, his responsibility sporadic.

Both Hanlon and the skier, Johann Wikivill, come to a new life. Wikivill, in still another demonstration of West's increasing penchant for ironic parallels, has his face changed by a former "Experimenter" of the prison camps. Thus the physical traces of war are removed, but the psychological scars are left. He is the village in microcosm. The second stage of Wikivill's recovery is at the war-scarred hands of the priest who restores hope to his battered mind and soul by demonstrating human and divine love for him as a person.

Hanlon's return from an empty sophistication, and

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legalistic formalism is accomplished through the agency of an innocent young girl. Hanlon is a married man, but in his marriage there is no trace of love. The love of the young girl changes his life. But her Catholic conscience forces her to give him up. At this time Hanlon's wife seeks to return to him, and Hanlon fearfully, and reluctantly goes to meet her. They never meet. His wife dies in a plane crash. Hanlon and his young love, we take it, live happily ever after.

The forced, cheap, and magical resolution of this novel cannot obscure two points. First it is still another example of competent, professional writing, even though it is more an idle afternoon's reading than an object of serious study. But the direction of the themes is evident. They serve to stress the radical importance of persons as a factor of history. There is also, and this is of primary importance, the growth of half-persons into integral human beings under the influence of human and divine love, and the healing of society's sores by an understanding and compassionate State and Church.

IT IS NOW TIME to turn our attention to *The Devil's Advocate*. West's familiar use of complex personal relationships as a scaffolding for his theme and as a vehicle for his irony is here given a new dimension. The relationship of Nerone and Black is the obvious case. This relationship pointed out by James M. Connolly is so subtly insinuated that no previous critic had noted it: the saint and the homosexual artist are brothers, in fact, twins. The saint has translated his family name, Black, into the Italian, Nerone. Even if Connolly is wrong in seeing a blood relationship, the meaning to be drawn from their complementary lives is obvious. It is the case of half-men who face a crisis involving love. West's theme that it is love which integrates and fulfills a man is justified positively in the case of Nerone, and negatively in the case of Black. Thus this personal relationship bears in the subtlest of manners the full burden of the author's theme.

In earlier books such relationships have held a note of irony. But in *The Devil's Advocate* the irony has a new, frightening and exquisite edge. Because of the love in his soul Nerone dies glorying in martyrdom, but its absence in the soul of Black brings him to picture himself as a "martyr" of nature, vitiated in his very being by a cruel God, alienated by a Church that will not understand, and despised by a hypocritical society. He dies in the despondency of suicide.

It is on the level of symbol and myth that West's greatest advance in technique is noticeable. Nerone is executed while tied to an olive tree whose branches give the impression of a cross. Against this same tree Black paints Nerone's son as a symbol of crucified youth. On the same tree Black dies as a suicide after destroying his painting. At the foot of the tree Meredith makes his final act of faith and hope, and in the same spot pleads with Black to say a redeeming act of contrition.

As a symbol the tree seems to be set in contrast to the phallic symbol in the Bishop's garden. The stone image is a hang-over from a pre-Christian society, but these half-pagan Christians still tend to place in its charms some of their hope for the future. Their only hope, however, is in the cross, in the olive tree that grows on the mountainside.

The olive-tree cross is more valuable still, for it epitomizes the myth or archetypal action that gives a hard core to the tale. The profound action which West here dramatizes is nothing less than the redemptive crucifixion of Christ. James Connolly has pointed out the deep significance of this theology of redemptive suffering, and compassionate love in *The Devil's Advocate*. The plot parallels are obvious. Nerone is dragged through the streets to a mock trial. He is executed at three o'clock. Aldo Meyer plays the role of Pilate. There would also seem to be further parallels to the temptation in the desert when Nerone goes to Il Lupo's hide-away, which is just beyond Satan's Rock, there to refuse the offer to join hands with the wolf who is to come in sheep's clothing to a starving people. There is not room for both of them and so Nerone dies.

WHEN WE turn to a consideration of the themes with which West concerns himself in *The Devil's Advocate* we discover immediately the familiar pattern of social criticism. There can be little question that the social concerns of his previous novels and *Children of the Shadows* are present in his most recent work, and obtrusively so. There is a sense, in fact, in which this new novel can be thought of as a companion to the lesser *The Crooked Road*. The basic concern of both is the terrible physical impoverishment of Southern Italy, a state of near-starvation, and the attendant lack of those very factors of privacy and hope which insure a man's dignity. In *The Crooked Road* we examine the politicians who are responsible. In *The Devil's Advocate* it is the churchmen. The social problem is pervasive. Its manifestations range from the ignorance which prompts the rejection of Meyer's help at the birth of a child, to the Bishop's discourses on the sad state of agricultural information. It is present even in Black's interest in Paolo. It is the beginning of Nerone's mission.

But where West's technique has increased in quality, his social pre-occupation becomes obtrusive in *The Devil's Advocate*. His social thesis is secondary but at times, from a lack of control, it obstructs the development of primary interests. Two examples, neither of them conclusive nor of such magnitude as to do substantial hurt to the book, come to mind. The first is the series of scenes between the Bishop and

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Meredith. Not only do they become overwritten and diffuse, but the persistent intrusion of the social questions clouds the real dramatic function of these scenes. The primary function, we take it, is to dramatize the arrival of the first stage of love in the life of Meredith, the recognition and the acceptance of the need for human friendship. This same fault—to employ a second more diffuse example—leads to an excess of barbs at Rome and the Vatican Bank which, true or false, do not materially aid the story.

The other theme to be considered is centered in West's primary thesis in *The Devil's Advocate,* his thesis on the role of love. In this novel he has chosen to examine love at many levels; the awakening of love in Paolo and Rosetta; the frustrated physical love of the Contessa; the perverted love of Black; the friendship of Meredith and the Bishop; the companionate love of the Pastor for his housekeeper; and the romantic love of Nina and Nerone, which opens out into the spiritual love of Nerone for God, and has a parallel in the awakening of compassionate love in Meredith.

There is little doubt that Aldo Meyer is speaking for West when he tells the Monsignor: "love is the most terrible thing in the world." Terrible it is in the same sense that Jacob spoke when he said: "This is a terrible place." For God has been here. In all love, even in the most debased, there is a vestige of God's own life. Because love can almost be thought of as sacred in itself, it has always the hidden or explicit possibility of leading a man to God. Such a belief was present in *Backlash,* but there it lacked the persistent power that it has in *The Devil's Advocate.* A theme lightly probed in the former novel becomes the overriding vision of the newest.

West's theme, however, is not merely the importance or terror of love. It is more precisely the relationship of physical and spiritual love. His treatment of Nerone makes this patent. He has Nerone write: ". . . It was in the splendor of my surrender to Nina and hers to me, that I first understood how a man might surrender himself to God—if a God existed. The moment of love is a moment of union—of body and spirit—and the act of faith is mutual and implicit. . . ."

There is one other statement which might summarize the point. "And love in all its forms and degrees is a surrender of bodies in the small death of the bed, the surrender of the spirit in the great death which is the moment of union between God and man."

THE POSSIBILITIES of such a theme are immense, and so are the traps it lays. One such trap is sensuality. It is interesting to note that of the books that we have considered, *The Devil's Advocate* is the most elevated in its spirituality, and the most consistently sensual. That these are sensual people living in a hard and sensual atmosphere is beyond question. But West's preoccupation with the relationship of sexual and divine love produces a plethora of images which are not really called for. Hardly a character or a scene is presented without some reference to things sexual.

It is in minor scenes that this is most pronounced and indicative. On the train Meredith reflects that a pair of young lovers are nearer, perhaps, to the divine design than he is in his unscarred priesthood. When Meredith visits Father Anselmo, who lives in concubinage, and sees the housekeeper acting like a wife, he is made to feel that his own life has been wasted. In the relationship of Paolo and Rosetta we are given an idyll which we are meant to approve, particularly as it is used as a foil to the perversity of Black.

Such preoccupation indicates a romanticism and sentimentality which, in smearing the line that distinguishes without separating human and divine love, vitiates the exalted potentialities of his theme even as it weakens its drama. This point is closely connected and perhaps inseparable from the point which we want to make now in terms of the focus which West employs to resolve the problems of his novel.

In this novel men come to God. If man is to do so, if he is to save himself, he must, as Father William Lynch insists, come to grips with the finite. Only by a deep, personal penetration of limited being can man come ultimately to the unlimited being of God. There is, however, a keen difference between an emergence of the eternal from the heart of the finite, and a kind of metaphorical, magical use of the temporal as a signification of the eternal.

In *Backlash,* God steps into the final scenes, and in His Providence a plane crashes. Hanlon, as a result is free to marry and return to God by way of the confessional. This is a magical use of God. What we have in the new novel is far more complex and subtle. But it does seem at times that West may be using love, sacred and profane, as a kind of magic for resolving his thematic and dramatic problems. The man-in-love who greets us as the ideal of these pages is presented in a final heroic stance. West implicitly avoids the truth that many who successfully love never activate its potential for the divine, nor do they even suspect its presence.

We are suggesting that West is in danger of employing love in the same way that Hemingway employs courage, or Sartre and Camus, despair. The problem in West is even greater, for he is within a shadow of the truth. Nonetheless the love of which he speaks is perilously close to the pathetic posturing of many modern fictional creations who stand amid the ruins to protest that, although all else fail, love lasts and saves. *The Devil's Advocate* must be treated, then, as a higher plateau and not the peak. But it is a plateau from which the view is magnificent, and the peak visible. The ground is firm even though it borders an abyss.

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THE SCREEN

SEE NAPLES AND DIE

CLARK GABLE and Sophia Loren may be the stars of "It Started in Naples," but the film's greatest asset is its magnificent scenery. Using VistaVision and Technicolor cameras at their best, cinematographer Robert L. Surtees makes Capri and Naples sparkle with life and beauty. The story itself is only mildly interesting, but the scenery and the actors provide a vitality that makes up for the obviousness of the plot. Clark Gable, acting his age with a nice sense of dignity and humor, portrays a Philadelphia lawyer who arrives in Naples to settle his late brother's estate and is shocked to discover he has a ten-year-old nephew of whom he had never heard. Sophia Loren, who improves in looks and acting with every picture, portrays the aunt who raised the orphaned youngster as best she could on what she makes as an entertainer in a flashy cafe. Played by a young Italian named Marietto who's a born actor in this good-little-bad-boy role, the nephew is so appealing that Clark feels duty-bound to take the cigarette-smoking, wine-drinking kid away from this "irresponsible" aunt. What Clark overlooks, however, is the strong bond of love between the boy and the aunt and the boy's hope that his American uncle will marry his Italian aunt. The boy is not convinced by Clark's reply: "When a man's been a bachelor as long as I have, marriage is not a convenience or necessity."

The humor and situations in "It Started in Naples" are keyed for adults. Handsomely produced by Jack Rose and generally well directed by Melville Shavelson (both of whom wrote the saucy script with Suso Cecchi D'Amico) the picture will probably appeal to audiences who like their summer fare light. They may be somewhat disappointed that director Shavelson, who handled Gable and Loren and Marietto so amusingly, allowed Vittorio De Sica, the fine Italian actor-director who should know better, to pull so many clichés in his role as a skirt-chasing lawyer. And in spite of the good cast, lively humor and stunning views, they may find the story is dragged out too long, especially since it's inevitable from the beginning that Clark will never be able to walk out on Sophia, that darling boy and irresistible Capri.

AUDIENCES who like their humor more brittle and at the same time their slapstick more broad should find that "School for Scoundrels" fits the bill very well. It is another zany English satire which keeps the viewer chuckling even as he recognizes himself in its confusion of truth and absurdity. Since writers Hal E. Chester (who also produced) and Patricit Moyes based their screenplay on Peter Ustinov's adaptation of Stephen Potter's hilarious books, *Gamemanship, Oneupmanship* and *Lifemanship,* the film has a oneupmanship to start with. And Robert Hamer's bright direction of a good cast adds considerably to the fun. Ian Carmichael, who has perfected the role of the booby through a series of British movies, plays a one-downer who attends Alastair Sims's College of Lifemanship. Particularly anxious to win Janette Scott and to give his rival, smiling Terry-Thomas, his comeuppance, Ian proves an apt pupil in a series of crazy lessons and becomes a one-upper under Sims's cynical tutelage. The changes in Ian, and the before-and-after scenes, are quite amusing, although they become rather obvious after the first few samples. But the burlesque is fun, and the film's final point is well made: once sincerity rears its ugly head, this oneupmanship stuff is powerless.

THEN AGAIN, summer moviegoers who prefer their entertainment more flashy than thoughtful may very well succumb to a mystery thriller like "Portrait in Black" in which the girls outsmart the boys and nobody is the winner. The picture's opening reveals the unhappy situation in which Lana Turner finds herself: although her husband (Lloyd Nolan), a San Francisco shipping tycoon, is rolling in dough, he's an invalid and will never give Lana a divorce so she can marry her lover (Anthony Quinn) who also happens to be the husband's doctor. So Lana and her boyfriend plan the invalid's death, which the doctor conveniently pulls off with the help of a hypodermic needle. I'm not giving away any of the plot's secrets; the murder's not the mystery, but the anonymous letter congratulating Lana on her success is.

"Portrait in Black" is loaded with letter-writing suspects, and director Michael Gordon focuses on them one or two at a time until his film becomes sort of a game of letter, letter, who wrote the letter? Among the game's other players are: Richard Basehart as Nolan's conniving lawyer, Virginia Grey as his secretary, John Saxon as a tugboat captain interested in Lana's stepdaugher (Sandra Dee), Ray Walston as Lana's chauffeur, and Anna May Wong whose return to the movies is most welcome even when she portrays another false clue, the sinister housekeeper. Some of this is rather exciting, and much of it is rather silly, but the film is seldom dull; and San Francisco and Miss Turner never looked more attractive than in Ross Hunter's handsome production in Eastman Color.

MORE on the realistic side is "Murder, Inc," which is based on the book written by Burton Turkus (and Sid Feder) who was assistant D.A. in Brooklyn when the infamous murder-for-pay gang was broken

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up. I don't know how factual the movie really is, but it's well stocked with characters whose names made the headlines in the '30s (Lepke, Albert Anastasia, etc.), and it has a grim semi-documentary atmosphere that makes it seem like the real thing. The plot centers on a young married couple (played by Stuart Whitman and May Britt) who are not exactly angels but who are also not as vicious as the criminals who force them into the gang. The worst of these is Abe Reles who carries out the murders and other crimes with a sort of lip-smacking glee made even more repulsive by the outstanding performance of Peter Falk. Although effectively produced by Burt Balaban (who also directed with Stuart Rosenberg), "Murder, Inc." is too explicitly detailed in killings, rape and other violences for most audiences, including me—but then, I suppose, every moviegoer to his own taste.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"APARTHEID AND THE CHURCH"

Capetown

TO THE EDITORS: I appreciate the compliment paid to the *Southern Cross,* South Africa's national Catholic weekly, by Mr. Sean Boud in his article "Apartheid and the Church" [June 3]. His statement regarding the paper's "pitifully small" circulation of 8,000 was not, happily, correct. Over 17,000 copies are sold every week.

Certain other statements in the article, lacking the qualifications which I am sure Mr. Boud intended, are also misleading. According to the Bureau of Census and Statistics, the total population of the Union in June, 1959, was 14,673,000. According to the 1960 Catholic Directory, the total Catholic population of the Union was 846,207. Of these, 594,479 were African, 147,360 White and 101,390 Colored (mixed race).

Yet Father Colin Collins is quoted as saying that in South Africa "the Church has remained inhibited, its contact system has hardly touched any bloc other than the English-speaking original groups in whom it strove to keep the faith."

Father Collins' words must have been quoted out of context, for African Catholics far exceed White Catholics, and Colored Catholics are not so far behind. In the Archdiocese of Cape Town there are more Colored than White Catholics. They did not become Catholics by spontaneous infusions of Grace.

Presumably Father Collins was only referring to the White people, but a good liberal like Mr. Boud should not give the impression that he thinks only in terms of Whites.

My own guess is that Father Collins was referring to the limited efforts made until very recently to convert the Afrikaner. But Mr. Boud implies later that too much is being done for the Whites and not enough for the Africans. Far more has been done by way of evangelization of the Africans than by way of converting the Afrikaner, as is shown by the figures for African Catholics quoted above.

Mr. Boud also implies that White Catholics are getting more than their fair share of the Church's educational effort. According to the 1960 S.A. Catholic Directory, 43,262 White children were being taught in Catholic schools, 96,683 African and 27,074 Colored children. In other words, the Church is educating nearly three times as many non-Whites as Whites.

ANDREW MURRAY,
Managing Editor.

REPLY

New York, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: I can find, with one exception, no discrepancy between the figures quoted in my article and those given by Mr. Murray.

I stated that the White Catholic population is around 140,000—his figure. I also stated that ninety-two per cent of the Africans are not Catholics. For the point I was making, *i.e.,* the kind of education given to non-whites, it did not seem necessary to differentiate between the pure-blood Africans and the small minority of those of mixed-blood, since both receive the same kind of education from the Church. I thus counted them together to get 700,000 (Mr. Murray's figure) which makes ninety-three per cent of the non-white population who are not Catholics. Was one per cent too great an increase to have estimated in the increase of non-white Catholics, in the lack of any available figures for the year June 1959-1960?

The context of Father Collins' speech made in 1957 does not seem to me to change his statement. The full reference is as follows: "Today White Catholics still form the same percentage of the over-all population as they did fifty years ago. Except perhaps very recently there has been little sign of local vocations increasing rapidly and giving the Church its rooted qualities. The Church among the Whites has remained inhibited . . . etc". I would have thought that my next paragraph, "Archbishop McCann met this point of view by saying, 'The work of the Church *among the European community* . . . etc.' ", made it clear that Father Collins was referring—as indeed I quoted him earlier—to White Catholics. I hope the article considered as a whole did not give the impression that I was thinking "only in terms of Whites." It would be difficult to leave any mention of them out in discussing South Africa so I trust Mr. Murray will understand the inclusion of this section.

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It was also from Father Collins that I quoted the figures for there being one priest for every five hundred White Catholics and only one for every fifteen hundred Africans, and also the figures for the distribution of teaching Religious among the races. It would therefore appear legitimate to infer that Father Collins is also criticizing the work and inhibition of the whole Church when he says that there have been few local vocations. As vocations are a symptom of how permanent, rooted and indigenous the Church is in any place, the relative scarcity of African vocations would show up the shortcomings of African education that I mentioned in the article and which are implied in Father Collins' figures. If the figures of this high-ranking official of the Apostolic Delegation are inaccurate, then Mr. Murray's argument is with him not me.

Since non-Whites outnumber Whites in South Africa by four and one-half to one, it is to be hoped and expected that objectively more priests and religious *are* working for the non-Whites than for the Whites. This is perfectly reconcilable with the figures I quote for the distribution of priests and religious among the races and with the implication contained in them. Father Collins' point was that *in proportion to their numbers* the Whites have more priests and religious working for them than do the non-Whites. In the field of education this would mean that, regardless of the actual numbers educated, religious who were teaching White pupils had fewer to look after and more time to devote to each one than those teaching Africans.

As regards Mr. Murray's first point I can only say *Mea Culpa.* Or better *Felix Culpa?* Having been told by the South African Government Information Service in New York that there were no figures published of the circulation of South African newspapers, I relied on my recollection of a conversation I had with Mr. Murray before leaving Capetown in January, in which I understood him to say that the circulation of the Southern Cross was between seven and eight thousand. I apologize for this misquotation but presume he would agree with the principle involved, that his paper deserves a much larger circulation. SEAN BOUD.

THE EICHMANN CASE

New York, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Following your editorial on the Eichmann case [June 24], may I suggest that the least we can do is to keep silent about "what the nations of the world cannot accept," considering all they did accept in the recent past, namely that none of them found any voice to protest while the six million Jews were being systematically slaughtered.

At the last minute, in 1945, after the British had jailed Joel Brand who tried desperately to save the last million of his people in Hungary by negotiating Eichmann's odious offer—10,000 trucks against one million Jews—at that time only some protests came from Roosevelt, Sweden, Switzerland and the Vatican. Even then the protests were weak because no government felt committed to exercise pressure to save one million Jews, because not one nation was sufficiently interested in the fate of Jews; five millions had already gone to their extermination without any nation protesting against the Reich's "transcendent right to ignore international law." On the contrary, Lord Moyne, hearing that through the belated transaction one million might be saved, had exclaimed, "What shall we do with them?" and later Cordell Hull wrote, "The State Department did not have the large amounts of money and personnel needed to carry out a plan of reaching and bribing the German officials in charge of the extermination program."

The fact that Israel took it upon itself to find Eichmann and bring him to judgment in Israel points to the measure of distrust that Israel feels towards all nations when it comes to do justice to Jews. And who, knowing history, can blame Israel? Indeed, though many were the individuals in Europe who, at the risk of their own lives, saved Jewish people, no nation, no government, lifted a finger.

Finally, let us not forget that, escaped from American custody after the war, Eichmann traveled with an Italian Red Cross document obtained through the Vatican's displaced persons bureau. It is very hard to explain how, even under the assumed name of his well known assistant Krumey, Eichmann could have been able to secure a traveling paper. Shall we then continue to say that Israel should trust other nations in Eichmann's trial?

The truth is that at this point the fate of Eichmann is irrelevant. However, what is of the utmost importance is that everything hidden be disclosed, including the past criminal apathy of all the so-called Christian nations. And perhaps only in Israel can this be accomplished. CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

TWO APPEALS

The Salesian Fathers appeal for funds for rice to stave off a famine that threatens Manipur in North India. Donations may be sent directly by airmail (25¢) to: Rev. Fr. P. Bianchi, S.D.B., Don Bosco Youth Center, Imphal, Manipur, India or % Salesian Missions, 148 Main St., New Rochelle, N.Y.

In Madras international volunteers and a local committee are building homes and supplying food for the most destitute; some $3,700 is needed to provide a Community Center for this program, which has already produced 200 new homes. Address: Rev. Fr. P. Ceyrac, S.J., Sec'y, Shanti Cottage, Cherian Nagar, Tondiarpet, Madras 21, India.

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Illuminating the Landscape of Surrealism

A KINDLY CONTAGION. By Walter Toman. Bobbs-Merrill. $3.75.

By BETTE RICHART

SURREALISM is one of the inexhaustible aspects of art's enterprising. Wallace Fowlie has called it "a way of life, a method by means of which we may accept the enigmas of existence, and in daily living learn to transcend impotencies, defeats, contradictions, wars." From Don Quixote to Dali, we have abundant and vibrant examples of what Mr. Fowlie means: this refusal to submit to gravity, in both senses of the word, is a therapeutic technique, and who can say what pomposities Dali's limp watches may have prevented forever?

Two recent manifestations (perhaps eruptions would be a better word) have seemed to be absurdly charming: pataphysics, or as Alfred Jarry calls it, "the science of imaginary solutions," and Walter Toman's *A Kindly Contagion*. Toman himself refers to his book as "short circuits," rather than short stories, and quite properly so. They are sparks of insight which might well set fire to the overstuffed furniture of pedantry, if one weren't very careful to smother them quickly. They are slight and will not endure, but they are so explicit that durability is not a valid test for them.

The terror and tenderness of the human condition are conveyed with eerie effectiveness in the stories "Love in Armor," "At the Dances of the Deaf Mutes," "The Mental Patients' International." In the first, the young lover states a pretty universal problem: "We are both in armor. . . . From the beginning of our acquaintance, she has worn armor. At first glance it was a bakelite suit, something modern at least, but if you looked at it more closely, you could notice through the cracks in the joints that she wore another suit of armor under it, and this of course *was* iron." The young man had stored his own armor in the attic, "but having seen the armor underneath, I put my own armor on, and what goes on between us now is a very unfortunate thing." He kisses her visor and longs for marriage, doubting that they will ever lie together naked.

The deaf mutes too, of course, have a communication problem. At their dances, they cannot hear the music, "nor did they feel the vibrations with their chests, as some assert." Finally a system is devised; a string of colored lights is made to sway to the rhythms of the music, but the musicians object. Too mechanical. Many imaginary solutions are tried, but none work. Then the deaf-mute Peter brings his blind girl Ilse to a dance, and one sees instantly that power really is made perfect in infirmity, that to love is to dance.

The communication in "The Mental Patients' International" doesn't quite come off, naturally, though the doctor to whom it was proposed (by a patient) finds himself unable to dismiss the idea. And Franz, whose parents had no use for him, finds a way to get attention after all: "his existence began to ring with loud peals. . . . How embarrassed he was about those strokes!" His parents didn't live to hear his genius resounding, "but would have sunk into the ground rather than admit that they themselves heard the ringing." And the girl whose only talent is to laugh (no better off than the elf king's daughter in Anderson, whose only talent was to tell the truth); the girl who is too beautiful, so that "no one touched her, even at a dance, and no one at all failed to listen to her." . . . The roll thrower, Otto Keller, the believer—the entire gallery of grotesques—are trying to solve the same problem, the one that Sophocles heard on the Aegean: the problem of communication. Psychiatry has clarified the necessity of solving it; it is a game of words no longer, but man's deepest need, the condition of his emotional salvation. These modest stories take a step in that direction.

The current issue of the *Evergreen Review* is exclusively devoted to pataphysics, which is closely related to Zen, being "in aspect imperturbable," "the science of the realm beyond metaphysics." It is an interesting caprice of Jarry's, a clarification of dadaism perhaps, if there can be such a thing! Fowlie calls surrealism "a most honorable form of cheating," and one cannot help thinking that these aberrations are not at all destructive of the values of art, but in forcing us to re-examine tradition, do it a service.

The whole of art might well be defined as imaginary solutions to the problems posed by our private nightmares; one must only be sure that the nightmares are authentic. Toman accomplishes this end on a minor scale, Jarry on a somewhat larger, Kafka and Dali on a grimly grand one. It is all zestfully worth doing: nothing that is simple, my old philosophy professor used to say (to shock us), can be real. We must add, in the same spirit, that nothing that is ridiculous can be quite unreal, either, from the immortal clowns slipping on a banana peel to these latter-day philosophers, espousing the non-sequitur, sometimes so brilliantly.

The thread that divides sanity and madness has troubled people before and after Hamlet. In the few moments of vision which must serve most of us to illuminate a lifetime—great love, great loss, our first glimpse of a Rembrandt—an element of fantasy takes over, and we are dazzled or numbed so that familiar chairs and pictures do not seem to be in their usual places. During one of the major expansions of my own life, I kept thinking of my interior landscape as illuminated by lightning rather than its customary sunlight: the scene was somehow distorted slightly, but the objects were clearly seen and easily appraisable—fewer than I had thought, but Biblical in their grandeur. A few loves and deaths and memories stood out like trees in a storm, with lightning playing about

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them; the landscape of surrealism is that of extremity, and we dismiss it at our peril—the grave peril of complacency. Still, as people everywhere say of New York, it's all right to visit but we wouldn't want to live there (meaning it asks too much of us).

To the Nadir

THREE CIRCLES OF LIGHT. By Pietro Di Donato. Julian Messner. $3.95.

By PHILIP DEASY

TWENTY-ONE YEARS ago Pietro Di Donato wrote a best-seller, largely autobiographical, about a West Hoboken Italian bricklayer and his family, entitled *Christ in Concrete.* In *Three Circles of Light,* he returns to the same scene and the same family, but to a time period about ten years earlier than that of the first novel, to the years, that is, immediately before and immediately after World War I. Paolino di Alba, the youngster protagonist of the present novel, is the Paul, the central character of *Christ in Concrete.* The death of Geremio, Paul's father, so searingly described in the opening of *Christ in Concrete,* is the closing episode of *Three Circles of Light.*

A loose collection of episodes rather than a sustained narrative, *Three Circle of Light* nevertheless gives promise in its early pages of effecting a genuine evocation of a tenement childhood in a crowded polyglot neighborhood, all the shapes, sounds, and colors surrounding a tree growing in West Hoboken, now Union City. But the promise dies a-borning and the novel's descent into sentimentality, bathos, and just plain scurrility is rapid. The nadir is reached in the concluding chapters in the goings-on at Geremio's bier.

Of characterization in any true novelistic sense *Three Circles of Light* has none. It has only "characters" who are either caricatures or stereotypes. There are also a couple of grotesques, La Smorfia and Maria La Virgine, weird sisters who dominate one of the chapters, a revolting fantasy describing how the San Rocco parish was saved from the influenza plague of 1918. Much of what attempts to pass for humor in *Three Circles of Light* can only be said to be in execrably bad taste. The dialogue for the most part is in that phony Biblical idiom that purports to be a translation of the speakers' Italian, a device that was lyrically effective in *Christ in Concrete,* but here is only exasperatingly cloying. When Mr. Di Donato tries for a straightforward purple passage there is only flat stuff like the following: "Then Stella and I would leave the farm [they're on an outing in Saugerties] and wander the pathways and slopes and valleys of the pretty hills, discovering brooks and streams, and the animal life of field and sky, and walk in the silent, cathedral halls of a forest of giant pines that shaded out the hot sun."

Stella L'Africano is the stereotype sex-pot of *Three Circles in Light,* the child bride of a sixty-year-old named Sebastiano. When the Saugerties idyll takes place she, age twenty, is having a love affair with Paolino, age fourteen. "I longed," says the passionate boy, "to bury my face in the humid fragrance of her armpits." He does; and more. *Three Circles of Light* also features a Jesuit, Don Pietro of the San Rocco parish, who is oddly deficient in catechism: "Next Sunday Don Pietro ascended the pulpit. 'Commandment Seven,' he announced. . . . 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' " Presumably the paisanos of San Rocco's ended their Our Fathers with, "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory."

Mr. Di Donato is on record as saying that for many years after the success of *Christ in Concrete* he was too confused to write. That confusion must indeed must be worse

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confounded if he is now unaware that in *Three Circles of Light* he has put together a cliché-ridden, overdone piece of hokum.

The Way Men Love

THE FOUR LOVES. By C. S. Lewis. Harcourt, Brace. $3.75.

By MICHAEL NOVAK

TO ANYONE who has shared the pains of many kinds of love, this slender essay of C. S. Lewis will bring joy. Something is wrong in America, perhaps in the entire West, as Mr. Lewis notices, for in few places are love and sex written of with humor and conviviality. Where have there ever been so many people for whom love and sex are a problem, demanding vast reading, immense soul-searching, yet still yielding the taste of frustration and maladjustment? Mr. Lewis thinks of love as a simple thing for those who love, and of the accidents of sexuality as immensely comic—so much fervor entrusted to the whimsical body, in a kind of divine joke intended for our laughter and our joy. Hemingway, Mailer, Joyce, Lawrence—they all read like heavy puritans alongside C. S. Lewis. They know that something is wrong with the way men love, but they contribute with their seriousness and platonic ecstasies to the disease they set about to cure.

Mr. Lewis writes with one of the most self-effacing and congenial pens in the language, but his is a mind of ranging perspective. He comes to write of love from the long historical study he made in *The Allegory of Love*. He has perceived the platonic twist given to the notion of love by the early and middle centuries of our civilization—a long, pervasive idolizing of Eros, with a corresponding fear of Eros. Off-balance, Western attitudes towards love are constantly rocking right or left. From a theological point of view, the West is chronically sick with manicheanism. It cannot live matter-of-factly with love and sex. Obsessed, it cannot simply enjoy the difficulties with the joys, the comic with the tragic, the frequent imperfect with the rare perfect. It cannot laugh.

Mr. Lewis achieves his point of view with two great efforts. One is his long-trained ability to judge the time in which he lives, by his studies in other times and, even more, in theology. The second is his studied freedom from ideology and sophistication. Mr. Lewis does not write about or from scientific theories of love. He writes from and about what the man who loves can verify: the experience of love. Mr. Lewis has a careful mind; the critical example always occurs to him, the example that gives the lie to a tempting simplification. There is the delightful taste of common sense in his book, the wholesome freedom from too much Freud, Havelock Ellis, and Kinsey, and those other documenters of the Western sickness they cannot cure.

The image of Christian life which Mr. Lewis is quietly sketching is a beautiful thing. It is full of understanding, self-criticism, laughter, the ordinary discomforts and warmths, and it reaches to the center of God's inner life. It is *healthy*. And that is one quality rarely found in our civilization, or its treatises on love.

Mr. Lewis is modest and quiet in his use of theology. Yet it must be said that he puts theologians in their place: not always at the head of the class. The medieval schoolmen who wrote the now classical Christian statements on love were celibates, writing in the culture of the troubadours and all that M. Denis de Rougemont has suggested concerning that culture. Scholastic philosophy was chiefly platonic in spirit, despite its dry, methodic, unplatonic appearance; it is not noted for its healthy attitude on love and sex. St. Augustine, the great influence on that theology, had his own background in platonism, and his vivid personal experiences to overcome. Not even St. Thomas, the Aristotelian originator, could prevail against the current. It is hardly surprising, in the lacuna of creative thought that has occurred since St.

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Thomas and in the almost immediate revival of platonism in Protestantism and the Romantic movements, that the great heresies of the early East almost completely dominate the culture in which we live. Western culture has never incarnated a flesh-and-blood Thomistic image of man; always there has been a fear of the flesh, of human loves, of Eros, of sexuality. The Enlightenment has not allayed, it has exacerbated, these fears by treating them with high, ambivalent seriousness. Today, in frustration, we pay the price.

With Shaw and Russell, the life of common ordinary folk is mocked. It is good to see Mr. Lewis briefly characterize the Shavian attitude toward sex and the body, and set it beside the old pagan contempt for them. It is good to see Mr. Lewis note that what the mass of men think is never entirely right, but not entirely wrong either. One is grateful for his good sense in building towards higher ideas by being clear first on the lowlier; his calm hostility towards the nineteenth-century Romantics and the twentieth-century debunkers; the awareness one gets in reading him of the millions of really good lives being lived on earth, quiet, unideologized, not yet turned to ash by the boredom of the avant-garde.

Mr. Lewis has a beautiful sense of human need, of the loves that spring from human needs; and of the human ability to give, and the loves that spring from that ability. On these two loves he builds his book. He speaks of love for animals and nature, of Affection, Friendship (an outstanding chapter), Eros, Charity. He closes humbly at the point where men taste, really taste, the love of God, after they have learned what it is to love one another.

REVIEWERS

Bette Richart, a poet and critic, has contributed frequently to this magazine.

Philip Deasy is a member of the faculty at St. Peter's College, New Jersey.

Michael Novak has written for *America, Perspectives* and *Downside Review*.

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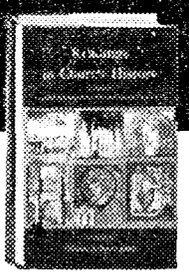

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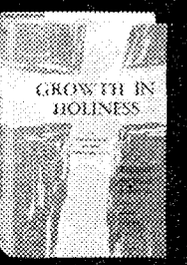

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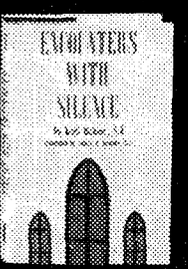

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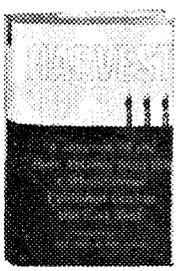

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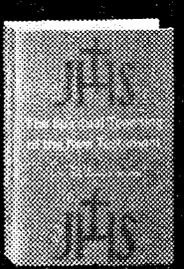

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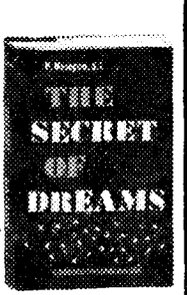

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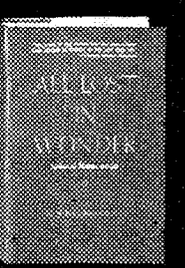

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